

**SANTA CLARA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
2603 Santa Clara Drive  
Thursday, February 26, 2026**

**Present:** Logan Blake, Chair  
Shelly Harris  
Kristen Walton  
Josh Westbrook  
Joby Venuti  
Tyler Gubler  
David Clark (via Zoom)

**Staff:** Jim McNulty, Planning and Economic Development Director  
Cody Mitchell, Building Official  
Debbie Andrews, Administrative Assistant

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Logan Blake called the Santa Clara City Planning Commission meeting to order on February 26, 2026, at 5:30 PM.

**2. Opening Ceremony**

**A. Pledge of Allegiance: Commissioner Gubler**

**3. Conflicts and Disclosures**

No conflicts or disclosures were reported by any Commissioners.

**4. Working Agenda**

**A. Public Hearing**

- 1. Under the State Annexation Statute, UCA 10-2-803, which was amended by the Utah Legislature in 2025, Santa Clara City intends to adopt an Annexation Policy Plan. The Annexation Policy Plan is intended to comply with the provisions of UCA 10-2-803 and incorporate all criteria required. This opportunity will allow affected entities to examine the proposed Annexation Policy Plan and provide input on it.**

Jim McNulty, Planning and Economic Development Director, presented the Annexation Policy Plan update, explaining that this was the required public hearing following the public meeting held a month prior. The City had previously adopted an Annexation Policy Plan in March 2024, but during the recent General Plan update process, staff determined that additional lands south of the current City boundaries in the Gap Canyon area should be included in the Annexation Policy Plan.

Mr. McNulty detailed the statutory requirements under Utah Code 10-2-803, noting that affected entities had been notified and given opportunities to provide input. The city had received comments from two affected entities: Ivins City and Saint George City. Sharon Allen from Ivins City attended the previous meeting and stated that if the Hafen property develops as commercial, it should remain in Ivins' boundaries, but if Santa Clara intends recreational development, Ivins has no objection to annexation. Ivins also requested consideration of dark sky lighting requirements for any development near their boundary.

St. George City, through Community Development Director Carol Winner, acknowledged receipt of the notice and indicated they have no objections to the proposed plan. They noted there is some overlap between the cities' annexation policy areas but are comfortable allowing property owners to determine which municipality to pursue for annexation. Commissioner Blake opened the public hearing. With no public comment, the hearing was closed and the Planning Commission moved to discussion. Commissioner Blake noted they had previously discussed this matter extensively.

## **B. Public Meeting**

- 1. See General Business Items.**

## **5. General Business**

### **A. Recommendation to City Council**

- 1. Recommendation to the City Council under the State Annexation Statute, UCA 10-2-803, which was amended by the Utah Legislature in 2025, Santa Clara City intends to adopt an Annexation Policy Plan. The Annexation Policy Plan is intended to comply with the provisions of UCA 10-2-803 and incorporate all criteria required. This opportunity will allow affected entities to examine the proposed Annexation Policy Plan and provide input on it.**

*Motion: Commissioner Westbrook moved that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval for the Annexation Policy Plan to the City Council. Commissioner Harris seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

### **B. Planning Commission Approval**

- 1. Approval of a Preliminary Subdivision Plat for the proposed Cottonwood Creek Phase 4B Subdivision located at the northwest corner of Riverwood Lane and Riverwood Circle. Lonnie Gubler, applicant.**

Mr. McNulty presented the preliminary plat for Cottonwood Creek Phase 4B, a two-lot subdivision on 1.16 acres with a project density of 1.72 units per acre. Both lots (Lot 3 and Lot 4) are approximately 0.51 acres each, meeting the half-acre minimum requirement for the Residential Agricultural (RA) zone. The lots will be accessible via Vineyard Drive, connecting to Riverwood Lane and Riverwood Circle, with the circle improvements already completed in 2017 during the original Phase 4 development.

Mr. McNulty outlined several key requirements including street improvements along Riverwood Lane for the entire frontage of Lot 4, compliance with building setbacks and height restrictions, and standard utility requirements. The applicant, represented by engineer Jared Bates, had requested a sidewalk waiver for the east side of Riverwood Lane due to space constraints and existing mature trees.

Commissioner Blake expressed concern about the need for an erosion hazard assessment under city code section 15.36.200, noting the property's proximity to the Santa Clara River and potential flood risks. He observed that riprap protection appears to end at Old Farm Road, and the property falls within erosion hazard boundaries shown on regional maps.

Lonnie Gubler, the applicant, questioned the erosion hazard requirement and requested permission to reduce the road pavement width from 30 feet to 28 feet to minimize impact on their agricultural operations to the south. The discussion revealed that any such reduction would require City Council approval as a separate waiver request.

Extensive discussion ensued regarding the road width reduction request. Commissioner Blake noted that the City's Transportation Master Plan shows Bonelli Trail extending south along the river and connecting to this area, suggesting future traffic beyond just the immediate lots. Commissioner Gubler raised concerns about creating bottlenecks for future development, while others debated the practicality of widening roads in the future if development patterns change.

The Commission ultimately agreed that if a pavement width reduction were granted, an additional easement should be placed on Lot 4 to preserve the ability to widen the road in the future without impacting the homeowner. Mr. McNulty clarified that both the sidewalk waiver and pavement width reduction would require separate City Council approval.

Commissioner Clark, participating online, expressed reservations about both the sidewalk waiver and road width reduction, emphasizing the need to avoid short-sighted decisions that might prove costly later as the area develops and traffic increases.

*Motion: Commissioner Westbrook moved that the Planning Commission grant preliminary subdivision plat approval for the Cottonwood Creek Phase 4B subdivision subject to eight conditions: the six standard conditions listed in the staff report, plus condition seven requiring compliance with city code section 15.36.200 regarding erosion hazard assessment, and condition eight regarding the pavement width reduction waiver subject to City Council approval. Commissioner Gubler seconded. Motion carried 4-3, with Commissioners Clark, Walton, and Harris voting in opposition.*

## **6. Discussion Items**

**A. None.**

## **7. Approval of Minutes**

**A. Request for Approval of Meeting Minutes: February 12, 2026**

The Planning Commission reviewed the minutes from February 12, 2026. No corrections were noted.

*Motion: Commissioner Harris moved to approve the minutes from February 12, 2026. Commissioner Walton seconded. Motion carried with Commissioner Venuti abstaining due to absence from that meeting.*

Mr. McNulty provided brief updates on recent City Council actions, noting that three ordinances previously reviewed by the Planning Commission (the R-1-4 zone, Temporary Sign ordinance, and Shared Monument Sign ordinance) were all adopted by the City Council the previous evening. He also addressed scheduling for the March 12 meeting during spring break, determining that several Commissioners would be absent and a quorum might not be available. He indicated he would decide whether to cancel that meeting based on the urgency of pending items.

Mr. McNulty announced the annual Utah Land Use Institute training scheduled for Friday, March 20, at the Abbey Inn, requesting Commissioners indicate their attendance preferences for either in-person or online participation to fulfill their required professional development hours.

**8. Adjournment**

Commissioner Blake adjourned the meeting at 6:27 PM.

*Jim McNulty*

**Jim McNulty**  
**Planning Director**

**Approved: March 26, 2026**